

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5530

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AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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USMISSION USUN

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 5530

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, IS

SUBJECT: MEETINGS OF DRUZE VILLAGERS ALONG GOLAN CONFRONTATION LINE

REF: DAMASCUS 5384

1. IN RESPONSE GENERAL PHILLIP'S INVITATION (REFTEL), I SENT DATT TO UNDOF HEADQUARTERS MORNING AUGUST 19 TO BE BRIEFED ON DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING MEETINGS OF DRUZE VILLAGERS FROM TWO VILLAGES ALONG GOLAN CONFRONTATION LINE.

2. PHILLIP SAID THAT ARRANGEMENTS WERE PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY, AND THAT HE EXPECTED EARLY COMMENCEMENT OF MINE CLEARANCE AND CONSTRUCTION OF MEETING SITE. HE THEN HANDED DATT HIS PROPOSED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING APPROVED BY GOI AUTHORITIES IN TEL AVIV AUGUST 16 (HE MET WITH LEVENSON AND UNIDENTIFIED AIDE FROM MINDEFENSE OFFICE) STATING THAT:

QUOTE:

A. WE ALL UNDERSTOOD THAT THE MEETING PLACE WILL BE
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AT AMR 22332971 (PLUS OR MINUS 40 METRES TO PERMIT BULL-

DOZER WORK TO LEVEL THE GROUND).

B. SYRIAN AUTHORITIES WILL NOT GO CLOSER TO THE AREA THAN 300 (THREE HUNDRED) METRES FROM THE MEETING PLACE.

C. THE ISRAELI CHECK-POINT WILL NOT BE PLACED EAST OF A LINE MARKED BY TWO WHITE-PAINTED BARRELS PLACED BY THE UN (IT IS PREFERRED THAT THIS CHECK-POINT REMAINS AT THE MAIN GATE AT THE EXISTING FENCE).

D. FROM THE TWO POSITIONS (DESCRIBED IN SUB-PARAGRAPHS B AND C ABOVE) THE FAMILY MEMBERS WHO ARE TO MEET WILL BE ESCORTED BY THE UN FROM BOTH SIDES, I.E., FROM 300 METRES AWAY ON THE SYRIANS SIDE, AND FROM THE FENCE ON THE ISRAELI SIDE.

E. IN THE EVENT A NEED ARISES FOR A MEETING OF THE TWO PARTIES AND THE UN, ON REQUEST TO THE UN THE REPRESENTATIVES OF SYRIAN AND ISRAELI AUTHORITIES WILL BE ESCORTED TO A POINT ON THE A-LINE. ON THESE OCCASIONS THE LANGUAGE SPOKEN WILL BE ENGLISH.

F. THE UN WILL DECIDE WHICH VILLAGE WILL REQUEST THE FIRST MEETING. THEREAFTER THE MEETING REQUEST WILL ALTERNATE BETWEEN VILLAGES.

G. THE NUMBER OF PERSONS ATTENDING A MEETING FROM BOTH SIDES MUST BE AGREED BY THE SYRIAN AND ISRAELI AUTHORITIES AND THIS NUMBER MUST BE KEPT TO A MANAGEABLE SIZE. THE FIRST MEETING WILL CONSIST OF 20 PERSONS FROM A SYRIAN VILLAGE AND 20 PERSONS FROM AN ISRAELI VILLAGE.

H. WHEN A MEETING IS ARRANGED BY ALL PARTIES, THE MEETING PERIOD WILL COMMENCE AT 0700 HRS GMT AND STOP AT 1300 HRS GMT. SUBJECT TO CHANGE DURING WINTER.

I. THE PARTIES WILL ENSURE THERE IS NO PHOTOGRAPHY OR PRESS COVERAGE OCCURRING AT THE MEETING SITE OR WITHIN VIEW OF THE MEETING SITE.

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J. THE UN WILL OFFER GOOD RADIO COMMUNICATIONS TO BOTH ISRAELI AND SYRIAN AUTHORITIES AND THE UN MAY PROVIDE EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION FROM THE SITE.

K. THE TWO PARTIES CONCERNED SHALL ENSURE THEIR VISITORS ARE UNARMED AND IN THE EVENT OF A SERIOUS DISTURBANCE THE MEETING CAN BE TERMINATED BY THE UN.

UNQUOTE

3. THIS MEMORANDUM WAS SUBMITTED TO SYRIANS AUGUST 18 FOR CLEARANCE BY MINDEFENSE TLAS AND GOS SHIHABI. ON AUGUST 19 DURING DATT'S VISIT TO PHILLIP, MESSAGE WAS RELAYED BY CHIEF SYRIAN LIAISON OFFICER GENERAL TAYYARA THAT SHIHABBI (TLAS WAS NOT MENTIONED) FOUND THE TEXT "ENTIRELY SATISFACTORY" SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING MODIFICATIONS:

A. SYRIAN OFFICIALS WILL NOT APPROACH THE MEETING SITE CLOSER THAN THE PRESENTLY OCCUPIED SYRIAN POLICE POST (THIS IS ABOUT 650 METERS WEST OF THE A-LINE).

B. FORTY-EIGHT HOURS NOTICE MUST BE GIVEN BEFORE ANY CONSTRUCTION IS UNDERSTAKEN.

C. DELETE PARENTHETICAL STATEMENT IN DRAFT PARA C. (COMMENT: PHILLIP VIEWS THIS AS UNASKED FOR CONCESSION BY SYRIANS WHICH WILL IN PRACTICAL TERMS ALLOW ISRAELI AUTHORITIES TO MOVE CLOSER TO THE MEETING SITE, I.E., TO THE ISRAELI VERSION OF THE A-LINE, WHICH LIES ABOUT 300 METERS EAST OF UNDOF A-LINE AT THIS POINT.)

D. SYRIANS WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MINE CLEARANCE BETWEEN AALINE AND B-LINE. (PHILLIPS ADVISED DATT HE WOULD REFUSE THIS OFFER AND UNDOF ITSELF WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MINE CLEARANCE.)

4. IN EXPLANATION OF POINT A, PARA 3 ABOVE, PHILLIP SAID THIS MEANT THAT SYRIAN AUTHORITIES WOULD NOT GO AS CLOSE TO MEETING PLACE AS HIS ORIGINAL DRAFT WOULD HAVE AUTHORIZED. HE ALSO EXPRESSED PLEASURE THAT SYRIANS
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HAD NOT BALKED AT POINT E IN PARA 2. NOTED THAT IDEA AND PHRASEOLOGZ WAS HIS OWN THOUGH HE SUSPECTED ISRAELIS HAD COME TO MEETING WITH SIMILAR IDEA "IN THEIR POCKETS."

5. PHILLIP OBSERVED THAT INITIALLY THIS ARRANGEMENT WILL PROVIDE FOR MEETINGS ONLY BETWEEN THE TWO NEIGHBORING VILLAGES WHOSE CURRENT POPULATION HE ESTIMATES AT 5,000 IN MAJH ASH-SHAMS AND 1,500-2,000 IN HADAR. HOWEVER, HE PERSONALLY FELT COOPERATIVE SPIRIT DISPLAYED TO DATE BY BOTH SYRIANS AND ISRAELIS ON THIS ADMITTEDLY LIMITED PROJECT BODED WELL FOR EXPANSION OF SUCH ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FUTURE. IN CONCLUSION, HE SAID HE WAS SHARING THIS MATERIAL WITH US BECAUSE HE KNEW OF THE CLOSE CONTACT BETWEEN SYG WALDHEIM AND SECRETARY KISSINGER ON ALL SUCH SUBJECTS.

MURPHY

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